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Table Talk

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"Children have never been very good at listening to their elders, but they have never failed to imitate them. ~ James Baldwin

The Food Guide Pyramid for Children



You may have seen the new Food Guide Pyramid for Children which was introduced earlier this year. It was developed and tested for children age 6-11 to increase recognition of MyPyramid and motivate children to make healthy food choices and be physically active every day. The materials available on the web-site include a poster, "Tips for Families" flyer, classroom lesson plans and activity sheets as well as a computer game. The classroom materials available for Level 1 (grades 1-2) may be adapted for younger children. Visit MyPyramid.gov for ideas on using the information in your classrooms.

In Search of Whole Grains

"Make half your grains whole" is the recommendation of the 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans. What are the benefits of whole grain? In addition to fiber, whole grains also contain vitamins, minerals and hundreds of other compounds that have health benefits. It is the combination and interaction between these components that play an important role in reducing the risk of chronic diseases. This is an example of the "whole" being greater than the sum of the parts.

What does this mean at your center? The Fall 2005 issue of Table Talk looked at the differences between white, wheat and whole wheat bread. But bread isn't the only source of whole grains. How can you find other foods made with whole grains? Here are some tips to help you find them in the supermarket:

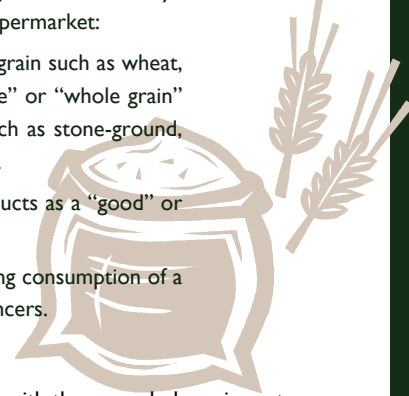
Check the ingredient list. Foods made with whole grain will list a whole grain such as wheat, oats, corn or rice as the first ingredient. Look for the words "whole" or "whole grain" before the grain's name. Descriptive words in a product's name, such as stone-ground, multi-grain or 100% wheat, do not mean that a product is whole grain.

Look for the whole grain label. Some manufacturers will label their products as a "good" or "excellent" source of whole grain.

Is there a health statement? Some products will carry a health claim linking consumption of a diet rich in whole grains to reduced risk of heart disease and some cancers.

How can you include whole grain foods in your menus?

- * Offer whole grain cold or hot cereals for breakfast or snack
- * Use whole grain breads, rolls and crackers
- * Experiment with the new whole grain pastas
- * Substitute brown rice for white



Top 10 Great Foods for Kids



1. **Low-fat dairy (1% fat or fat free) for children age 2 and over — the best source of dietary calcium, as well as protein and vitamins**
2. **Broccoli — anti-cancer substances, plus Vitamins A and C**
3. **Sweet potatoes— one of the healthiest vegetables, full of vitamins and minerals**
4. **Whole grains — lots of vitamins, minerals and fiber**
5. **Cantaloupe — a quarter of a melon contains a day's worth of Vitamin C plus betacarotene**
6. **Beans and legumes — a cheap, convenient and easy to disguise source of protein, vitamins and minerals**
7. **Berries — health-protecting antioxidants that kids love**
8. **Fatty fish, such as salmon and tuna — rich in omega-3 fatty acids, which help protect the heart**
9. **Dark, leafy greens — loaded with vitamins, minerals and antioxidants**
10. **Nuts — full of healthy fat plus protein, fiber, vitamins and minerals**

Activity Recommendations



Children receiving a high-quality preschool education including social, cognitive and physical development are more likely to succeed in school and in life. Until recently, social and cognitive development were emphasized, but few programs have focused on physical education. Physical activity programs are important in improving health and well-being and in promoting the development of lifelong physical activity habits.

In an effort to encourage physical activity for young children, the National Association for Sport & Physical Education (NASPE) has released physical activity guidelines for infants, toddlers and preschoolers. There are five guidelines for each age group addressing questions regarding the type of physical activity recommended, the environment and the individuals who will be facilitating the activity. The guidelines for toddlers and preschoolers are:

1. Toddlers should accumulate at least 30 minutes daily of structured physical activity; preschoolers at least 60 minutes.
2. Toddlers and preschoolers should engage in at least 60 minutes and up to several hours per day of daily, unstructured physical activity and should not be sedentary for more than 60 minutes at a time except when sleeping.

3. Toddlers should develop movement skills that are building blocks for more complex movement tasks; preschoolers should develop competence in movement skills that are building blocks for more complex movement tasks.
4. Toddlers and preschoolers should have indoor and outdoor areas that meet or exceed recommended safety standards for performing large muscle activities.
5. Individuals responsible for the well being of toddlers and preschoolers should be aware of the importance of physical activity and facilitate the child's movement skills.

What can you do to help young children be active? Encourage them to get moving with positive comments, plan structured physical activity each day as well as provide time for active free play and remember to set a good example

Visit www.aahperd.org for more information about NASPE.

Which has the most

Vitamin A?

- 1) 1/2 cup canned pumpkin
- 2) 1 cup 1% milk
- 3) 3 medium apricots
- 4) 1 cup cantaloupe



All of these provide Vitamin A, but the best source is the pumpkin with 2691 retinol equivalents (RE). The cantaloupes provides 515 RE, the apricots 277 RE and the milk 144 RE.

Vitamin A is important for normal growth, healthy skin and tissues, bone development and good vision, especially in dim light or darkness. CACFP recommends serving foods high in Vitamin A at least twice a week.

National Nutrition Month®

March is "National Nutrition Month®". The American Dietetic Association sponsors this month-long campaign to encourage healthy eating and physical activity. The theme for 2006 is Step Up to Nutrition & Health and is promoting five key messages:

- Balance food and physical activity
- Practice food safety
- Choose foods with plenty of nutrients, but low in calories
- Choose food from every food group
- Remember that the choices made today and every day affect your future health

If you are not already offering nutrition education at your center, this might be a good time to start. You might want to make a giant Food Guide Pyramid on the floor with string. Give children pictures of different foods and have them place the foods where they think they should be on the Pyramid. Plan a tasting party with new and familiar foods, emphasizing the importance of eating colorful food. Check out www.mypyramidkids.com for more ideas.

What you need to know about CN Labels

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The Child Nutrition (CN) Labeling Program is operated by the USDA's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) directly with commercial food processing firms. Manufacturers may choose to put these labels on a food product indicating the contribution that product makes toward meal pattern requirements. Examples of food products that contribute to more than one component include cheese or meat pizzas; meat, cheese or bean burritos; egg rolls; chicken nuggets; and breaded fish portions. Pizza, for example, may contribute to the meat/meat alternate, bread alternate and vegetable components of the meal pattern requirement. Chicken nuggets contribute to both the meat/meat alternate and grain alternate components. If you are serving chicken nuggets, the CN label will tell you how many are needed to meet the meat/meat alternate component of the meal pattern requirement. If you wish to claim the breading on the chicken nuggets as a grain component, the label will also tell you how many you must serve to meet that requirement. If you are serving another grain component, it would not be necessary to calculate the contribution the breading makes to the meal. We ask you to keep CN labels on file so we can be certain you are serving an adequate portion of main dish products and for any food items that you intend to claim as more than one component. Keep in mind that a CN label does not assure that a product is good for children or that products without CN labels are inferior. CN-labeled products should not cost more than other products. When comparing costs, look at the cost per ounce or pound of the *contribution to the meal pattern requirements*, not at the cost per ounce or pound of the *product*. To identify a CN label, look for the following: the CN logo, which is a distinct border; a 6-digit product ID code; the USDA/FNS authorization statement; and the month and year of approval appearing at the end of the authorization statement.

Compliance Concerns

INFANT FEEDING

Do you have infants at your center? Remember that all infants in care must have access to CACFP meals. You must offer an iron-fortified formula and each infant at your center should have a form on file indicating that the parent/guardian accepts or declines the formula offered. The amount of formula/food offered to each infant must be recorded. Be sure to offer the appropriate meal pattern for infants in each age group. If you need infant meal pattern posters, give your Specialist a call.

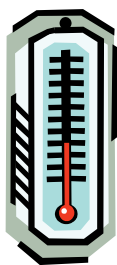
INCOME ELIGIBILITY AFFIDAVITS

This is one area in which mistakes can result in substantial fiscal action. It's also an area in which errors can be easily corrected. The most common mistakes are not including the parent letter on the back, social security number or the word "none" not included, incorrect or missing case numbers for categorically-eligible children, not current for the fiscal year, dated prior to the collection period and missing center staff approval. Take a look at your affidavits now to be sure they are accurate.

MONITORING VISITS

If you are a sponsor of more than one site or an owner of multiple single sites, you are required to monitor each center three times a year. Your first monitoring visit for FY2006 must be completed no later than March 31, 2006. Remember that two of the three visits must be unannounced and at least one of the unannounced visits must include a meal service. New monitoring forms were distributed at renewal training. If you need another copy, let us know; we'll be happy to provide one.

Safety Stuff



It is important to keep food safe for children as they are especially at risk for foodborne illness because their immature immune systems are not as able to fight off an illness. The refrigerator should be at a temperature that maintains food at 41°F or below. We recommend as a best practice that you check the temperature of your refrigerator daily and keep a log of those temperatures. Here are a few general tips for storing foods in the refrigerator. Do not overstock the refrigerator as you want cool air to be able to circulate. Label and date all foods to ensure the oldest products are used first.

Minimize the time food is in the danger zone between 41°F and 135°F by cooling foods quickly; you can do this by placing hot food into shallow containers before refrigeration. Store ready-to-eat foods above any raw or uncooked foods to avoid cross-contamination. And finally, be sure to keep the refrigerator clean.

Certified Food Safety Manager Exam

Our next class and examination will take place Tuesday and Wednesday, March 28 and 29, 2006



Did you know that over 90% of the winter vegetables sold in the United States are grown in Yuma County, Arizona? Lettuce, broccoli and cauliflower are the three dominant crops, but many other crops are also grown in this agricultural heart of western Arizona. One of those vegetables is cabbage. Cabbage is a member of the Cruciferae family and is a relative of kale, broccoli, collards and brussel sprouts. The three major types are green, red and Savoy. Cabbage has long been used as both a food and a medicine; ancient Greeks and Romans believed cabbage was capable of treating a host of health conditions. Cabbage is an excellent source of Vitamin C. In fact, sauerkraut, a dish made from fermented cabbage, was consumed by Dutch sailors to prevent scurvy during extended exploration voyages. In addition to Vitamin C, cabbage also provides fiber and many other vitamins and minerals. Uncut red and green cabbage may be stored in a perforated plastic bag in the crisper of the refrigerator for up to two weeks. Once cabbage is cut, it begins to lose its valuable Vitamin C content and should be used within a couple of days. Cabbage leaves are a great way to use leftovers. Fill a cabbage leaf with leftover rice salad or veggies, roll and bake in a medium oven for a healthy version of stuffed cabbage.

Pineapple Slaw

2½ cups shredded cabbage
1 cup shredded carrots
1 cup pineapple chunks
¼ cup raisins
2½Tbsp pineapple juice

Combine all ingredients in a large bowl.
Toss and serve or store in the refrigerator covered.



One cup cooked cabbage provides 33 calories, .6g fat, 1.5g protein, 6.6g carbohydrate, 3.5g fiber, .26mg iron, 198 IU vitamin A, 30mg vitamin C, 47mg calcium, 30mcg folate, and 0.17g omega 3 fatty acids.

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